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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7207  
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 9746  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7403  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0818  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7333  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
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RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI  
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 1815  
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 5661  
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

Subject: Media Reaction; Seoul  
China

Nuclear proliferation: N. Korea, Iran

"POWER OF OBAMA-STYLE SANCTIONS ON N. KOREA"

Deputy Political News Editor Kang Chan-ho observed in right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo (02/26): "While the greatest military challenge facing the U.S. is (the war in) Afghanistan, its greatest diplomatic challenge is to deter Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Whenever the Obama Administration gives warnings about Iran, it typically mentions North Korea. As such, if the U.S. shows any sign of ignoring the North's nuclear development, such an action will immediately prompt Iran to misjudge that it is okay to continue its nuclear development. This is why the ROKG is closely watching developments surrounding the Iranian (nuclear) issue. ... We most likely have a stronger desire than Ambassador Bosworth to see peace on the Korean Peninsula by engaging North Korea. However ... a cool-headed approach is required when dealing with North Korea."

Afghanistan

"UNILATERAL TROOP REDEPLOYMENT DECISION SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (02/26): "The deployment decision is a far cry from the current state of affairs in the international community. ... Far from rooting out terrorism, the war and occupation (in Afghanistan) is intensifying resistance from local militants. Accordingly, the U.S. announced plans to start withdrawing troops next year. ... Civilian provincial reconstruction team (PRT) workers have been targets of attack because militants treat them the same as occupying forces. ... With this decision (to send troops to Afghanistan), ROK citizens, as well as the troops deployed, will face a greater danger of being attacked."

TOKOLA